

IN THE CLAIMS

1 (Twice Amended).

A hand held gardening implement, comprising

a frame member having a longitudinal dimension, a proximal end, and a distal end;

a working element adjacent said frame member at said proximal end of said frame member;

a brace attached to said frame member adjacent said distal end of said frame member, wherein said brace has a forearm engaging surface; and

a handle attached to said frame member intermediate said working element and said brace, said handle projecting away from said frame member generally transversely with respect to the longitudinal dimension of said frame member, [wherein the forearm engaging surface is directed in the opposite direction as the projection of the handle] whereby said handle and said brace enhance the downward force developed and applied by the user.

8 (Amended).

A hand held gardening implement, comprising:

a frame member having a longitudinal dimension, a proximal end, and a distal end;

a working element adjacent said frame member at said proximal end of said frame member;

a brace attached to said frame member adjacent said distal end of said frame member, wherein said brace has a forearm engaging [portion] surface; and

a handle attached to said frame member generally transversely with respect to the longitudinal dimension of said frame member, wherein the forearm engaging [portion] surface is not in the same general plane as the frame member.

9 (Amended). The gardening implement according to claim [6] 8, said working element including a plurality of tines, whereby said gardening implement is a rake.

10 (Amended). The gardening implement according to claim [6] 8, said forearm engaging [portion] surface of said brace further comprising an elastic cushion for deforming to distribute force developed by the hand and arm of the user over an increased area of the forearm of the user.

11 (Amended). The gardening implement according to claim [6] 8, said handle further comprising a molded grip for conforming to the configuration of the human hand.
